

## **NCDOT Planning Summary for NCTA Projects**

### **Triangle Expressway Southeast Extension Wake and Johnston Counties (STIP Projects R-2721, R-2828, and R-2829)**

The Triangle Expressway Southeast Extension will span nearly 30 miles through southeastern Wake County from the N.C. 55 Bypass in Holly Springs to the U.S. 64/264 Bypass in Knightdale. It would also complete the southern and eastern portions of the Raleigh Outer Loop (I-540/NC 540). The project is anticipated to be constructed in two phases. Phase 1 would run from the N.C. 55 Bypass in Holly Springs to I-40 near the Wake/Johnston County line. Phase 2 would continue the project at I-40 and end at the U.S. 64/U.S. 264 Bypass in Knightdale.

- 1995 – NCDOT begins planning studies for R-2721 (NC 55 to US 401)
- 1995 – NCDOT holds a Corridor Protection Public Hearing for R-2721
- 1995 – NCDOT begins planning studies for R-2828 (US 401 to I-40)
- 1996 – Corridor Protection Map filed for R-2721
- 1996 – Lochner (private engineering firm) selected by NCDOT to prepare the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for R-2721
- 1996 – NCDOT combines R-2721 and R-2828 into a single EIS at the request of FHWA
- 1997 – NCDOT holds a Corridor Protection Public Hearing for R-2828 and files Corridor Protection Map for R-2828
- 1997 – NCDOT initiates Southern Wake Expressway Corridor Study & EIS
- 1998 – Project Kick-Off Meeting is held
- 1998 – Study Area established and constraints are mapped
- 1998 – Traffic request on-hold while awaiting new travel demand model
- 1998 – Preliminary alternatives identified
- 1999 – R-2829 added to the scope of R-2721/R-2828 EIS (now Southern & Eastern segments are combined)
- 2000 – EIS put on hold pending completion of the triangle area regional travel demand model
- 2000 – Development of new travel demand model & traffic forecasts
- 2001 – Funding concerns and priorities raised by localities
- 2002 – CAMPO request that the NEPA EIS be delayed
- 2005 – Local governments request consideration of Western, Southern, and Eastern Wake Expressways as toll facilities due to funding shortfalls
- 2006 – Project re-initiation meeting held with NCDOT; however, project was delayed until work on the Triangle Expressway (Triangle Parkway and Western Wake) could be undertaken and completed
- 2006 – Turnpike Authority continues NEPA work on Triangle Expressway
- 2009 – Turnpike Authority sells bonds on Triangle Expressway and begins construction
- 2009 – Turnpike Authority resumes and reinitiates project studies on Southern and Eastern Wake (Triangle Expressway Southeast Extension)
- November 30, 2009 – Notice of Intent filed in the Federal Register
- January 2010 – Project Scoping initiated
- 2010 – Study area boundary established, Purpose and Need Report developed, Preliminary Corridors identified
- September 2010 – Public Information Meetings held
- November 2010 – Eliminated several corridors; agencies approved at TEAC meeting
- December 2010 – New corridors added into consideration

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- December 2010 – Additional public meeting held to review new Tan Corridor
- January 2011 – TEAC meeting to discuss NCTA recommendation to eliminate Red and Pink Corridors; agencies did not support eliminating Red Corridor
- March 2011 – NC General Assembly enacts N.C. Session Law 2011-7 prohibiting the location of the Southeast Extension north of the existing protected corridor
- January 2012 – Draft Alternatives Development and Analysis Report published and distributed to agencies
- August 2012 – Draft Project Advancement Plan presented to agencies at TEAC meeting
- December 2012 – Joint letter from US Army Corps of Engineers and Federal Highway Administration sent to NCDOT specifying study of Red Route must be done to satisfy federal requirements.

**US 74 Monroe Bypass, Union County (STIP Project R-2559)**  
**&**  
**Monroe Connector, US 74 Improvements, I-485 to US 601**  
**Union and Mecklenburg Counties (STIP Project R-3229)**

The Monroe Connector/Bypass is a 19.7-mile toll highway that will run from US 74 at I-485 in eastern Mecklenburg County to US 74 near the Town of Marshville in Union County. The Selected Alternative is a four to six-lane controlled-access toll facility that follows existing US 74 for approximately one mile from just east of I-485 to east of Stallings Road and then proceeds on a new location alignment from east of Stallings Road to the project terminus at existing US 74 between the towns of Wingate and Marshville.

- 1980-1983 -- Thoroughfare Plan for City of Monroe identifies northern bypass of US 74 around Monroe
- 1989 -- US 74 designated as an Intrastate Highway
- 1992 -- Wingate Thoroughfare Plan identifies proposed Monroe Bypass
- 1995 -- Monroe Bypass added to NCDOT STIP
- 1995 -- NCDOT feasibility study recommends extending Monroe Bypass from US 601 to I-485
- March 14, 1996 -- Environmental Assessment for Monroe Bypass
- May 1997 -- Public Hearing for Section B & C of Monroe Bypass
- 1997 -- Selection of Preferred Alternative for Monroe Bypass
- June 20, 1997 -- Monroe Bypass Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) issued, completing environmental studies for Monroe Bypass.
- 1998 -- NCDOT begins the planning process for the Monroe Connector
- FY 2000 and FY 2001-- Right of Way Purchased for Monroe Bypass Sections B & C
- November 2003 -- Monroe Connector Draft EIS Completed
- FY 2005 -- Reevaluation of Monroe Bypass EA Begins
- February 2005 -- NCTA adopts the Monroe Connector as a candidate toll facility at the request of MUMPO.
- January 30, 2006 -- 2003 Monroe Connector Draft EIS was rescinded on by notice in the Federal Register (Vol. 71, No 19, page 4958).
- September 20, 2006 -- MUMPO recommends Monroe Bypass and Monroe Connector be combined into a single environmental study under the administration of the NCTA, and NCDOT Reevaluation process for the Monroe Bypass was then discontinued.
- January 19, 2007 -- FHWA issues a Notice of Intent in the Federal Register announcing its intention to prepare this EIS for the combined Monroe Connector/Monroe Bypass project.
- March 31, 2009 -- FHWA/NCTA issue Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Monroe Connector/Bypass project.
- May 2009 -- Combined Corridor/Design Public Hearings
- November 2009 -- Selection of Preferred Alternative for Monroe Connector/Bypass
- April 2010 -- Design-build process initiated with advertisement for Statements of Qualifications
- May 25, 2010 -- Final Environmental Impact Statement issued
- June 2010 -- Short-listed design-build candidates announced
- July 29, 2010 -- USFWS concurs with project's biological conclusions for protected species (including Carolina heelsplitter)
- August 27, 2010 -- FHWA issues Record of Decision
- August 31, 2010 -- Permit application submitted to USACE and NCDENR-DWQ
- October 2010 -- NCTA sells \$233 million in Appropriation Bonds for Monroe Connector/Bypass

- October 28, 2010 – Construction bids opened and contractor selected
- November 2, 2010 – Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC) files lawsuit on behalf of NC Wildlife Federation, Clean Air Carolina, and Yadkin Riverkeeper
- December 22, 2010 – NCDENR-DWQ Section 401 Water Quality Certification approval received
- December 31, 2010 – Federal judge denies SELC request for preliminary injunction on project
- October 24, 2011 – US District Court rules in favor of NCDOT/FHWA
- October 31, 2011 – SELC files appeal to US 4<sup>th</sup> District Circuit Court
- November 9, 2011 – NCTA sells \$10 million in revenue bonds
- November 16, 2011 -- \$214 million appropriation bonds sold
- November 21, 2011 – Design-Build contract awarded to joint venture of United Infrastructure Group, Inc., Boggs Paving Inc., and Anderson Columbia Company, Inc. for \$367.7 million
- December 15, 2011 – \$145.5 million GARVEE bonds sold
- May 3, 2012 – Circuit court rules against NCDOT/FHWA
- May 17, 2012 – NCDOT voluntarily suspends all permittable activities
- May 21, 2012 – All right-of-way acquisition, agency coordination, and design-build activities suspended
- June 15, 2012 – NCDOT files petition for rehearing to Circuit Court seeking review by the full court
- June 29, 2012 – Petition for rehearing denied
- July 3, 2012 – FHWA rescinds Record of Decision

**Gaston East-West Connector  
“Garden Parkway”  
Gaston and Mecklenburg Counties (STIP Project U-3321)**

Garden Parkway is a new 22-mile toll road that will begin at the I-485 interchange near the Charlotte-Douglas International Airport at N.C 160 in Mecklenburg County and continue west across the Catawba River into Gaston County, ending at I-85 west of Gastonia. The Authority plans to construct a four-lane highway from I-485/NC 160 in Mecklenburg County to US 321, a distance of about 15 miles. A two-lane section (on four-lane right of way) is anticipated to be constructed for the remainder of the project and will be widened to four lanes when traffic levels warrant and additional funding becomes available.

- 1991/1994 – “US 321/74 Bypass” included on Gaston Urban Area Thoroughfare Plan and MUMPO Thoroughfare Plan
- 2000 – GUAMPO passes resolution in support of using “alternative funding methods to accelerate construction of the US 321/74 Bypass, including methods that would require the payment of tolls by motorists”
- 2001 -- NCDOT began environmental studies of STIP Project U-3321 (Garden Parkway) to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
- 2002 – NCTA created and authorized to study up to nine turnpike projects, including Gaston East-West Connector (NCGS 136-89.183)
- February 2005 -- The NCTA Board of Directors selected the Gaston East-West Connector as a candidate toll facility.
- September 2005 -- Project was transitioned to the NCTA.
- April 2006 – FHWA issues Notice of Intent in Federal Register to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Gaston East-West Connector
- April 20, 2009 – FHWA/NCTA issue Draft Environmental Impact Statement
- June 2009 – Combined Corridor/Design Public Hearings
- October 2009 – Agreement on Preferred Alternative reached
- December 21, 2010 – FHWA/NCTA issue Final Environmental Impact Statement
- January 2011 – Design-build process initiated with advertisement for Statements of Qualifications
- March 8, 2011 – Statement of Qualifications due
- September 30, 2011 – NCDOT announced reduced candidate list
- February 29, 2012 – FHWA issued Record of Decision
- August 28, 2012 – Southern Environmental Law Center files lawsuit

**Cape Fear Skyway  
Brunswick and New Hanover Counties (STIP Project U-4738)**

The proposed Cape Fear Skyway project will run approximately 9.5 miles from the US 17 Bypass in New Hanover County to US 421 near Wilmington and include a high-rise bridge over the Cape Fear River.

- 1993 - Project first appeared in the Wilmington Area Thoroughfare Plan as the Southern Outer Loop with proposed eastern terminus at Independence Boulevard in Wilmington and western terminus at the US 17/74 and US 421 interchange just west of the existing Cape Fear Memorial Bridge.
- 1999 - Project changed in the Greater Wilmington Urban Area Transportation Plan, 1999-2025. The western terminus was moved to the proposed interchange of US 17 and the Wilmington Bypass (I-140). The project name was also changed to the Southern Bridge.
- 2003 - NCDOT prepared a feasibility study for the Southern Bridge as the initial step in the planning and design process.
- 2005 - The project was included in the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan. The project name was changed from the Southern Bridge to the Cape Fear Skyway.
- February 2005 - The Cape Fear Skyway was chosen by the NCTA as one of the four initial turnpike projects to be studied, planned, and developed.
- August 2005 - Legislation passed authorizing the NCTA to include the Cape Fear Skyway as a potential toll project.
- 2006 – FHWA issued Notice of Intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.
- January 2006 - Agency scoping meetings held.
- April 2006 - First public workshops held in New Hanover and Brunswick Counties.
- 2007-2011 – Development of project purpose and need statement, alternative corridors, and conceptual designs
- March 2011 – Additional public workshops held in New Hanover and Brunswick Counties.
- March 2012 – Value Engineering workshop held
- December 2012 – Wilmington Urban Area MPO Transportation Advisory Committee adopted a resolution affirming its support for continuing the environmental study process to identify the alternative that best serves the area's transportation needs.

## **Mid-Currituck Bridge Currituck County (STIP Project R-2576)**

The Mid-Currituck Bridge is a seven-mile, two-lane, toll project in Currituck County that would cross Currituck Sound and connect the mainland at U.S. 158 near Aydlett with N.C. 12 on the Outer Banks south of Corolla.

- 1975 - At Currituck County's request, the NCDOT Board of Transportation adopted a resolution identifying an east-west bridge crossing Currituck Sound as the most desirable access route to the Currituck Outer Banks.
- 1981 - An east-west bridge crossing Currituck Sound was discussed as an alternative in a Currituck County Outer Banks Access Environmental Impact Statement. Extending NC 12 to Corolla was selected as the Preferred Alternative and built.
- 1989 - NCDOT decided that the first phase of any transportation improvement for Currituck Sound should be widening the Wright Memorial Bridge to four lanes. This project was built.
- 1991 - A potential terminus for a Mid-Currituck Bridge was identified and protected under the provisions of the Roadway Corridor Official Map Act.
- 1991 to 1998 - NCDOT conducted studies for the Mid-Currituck Bridge Study. NCDOT began the scoping process in 1994. A Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was issued on July 6, 1995 and posted in the Federal Register. A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was signed and approved for public distribution in January 1998.
- 1995 - The General Assembly created the North Carolina Bridge Authority which was given the power to build, operate and maintain "...a bridge of more than two miles in length going from the mainland to a peninsula..." The General Assembly repealed the Bridge Authority in 2006. May 1998 - public hearings were held. The majority of the comments received on the project indicated opposition to a Mid-Currituck Bridge. Environmental resource and regulatory agencies expressed the concern that the DEIS had not assessed in detail an alternative that widened existing roads instead of a bridge. Following the public hearings, the assessment process was paused so that the issues raised during the public and agency review could be considered.
- 2002/03 - NCDOT reactivated the project assuming a Supplemental DEIS would be prepared.
- November 2003 - NCDOT, the Federal Highway Administration, and the study's environmental resource and regulatory agency partners reached a tentative agreement on a new statement of purpose of and need for the project.
- 2005 - NCDOT completed a hurricane evacuation clearance time prediction model to be used to finalize the hurricane evacuation clearance component of the statement of purpose and need.
- 2005 - the NC General Assembly passed legislation authorizing NCTA to contract with a single private firm to design and construct the Mid-Currituck Bridge as an accelerated pilot toll bridge project.
- 2006 - NCDOT turned administration of the project over to NCTA.
- June 3, 2008 - The 1995 Notice of Intent and the 1998 DEIS were rescinded by FHWA by notice in the Federal Register. On June 16, 2008, a Notice of Intent to prepare a new DEIS for the project was issued in the Federal Register.
- April 2009 - NCTA signed a Pre-Development Agreement with a private partner (Currituck Development Group, LLC) who would, subject to a final agreement, design, build, help finance, operate, and maintain a Mid-Currituck Bridge.
- March 2010 - A new DEIS was issued.
- May 2010 - Three Pre-Hearing Open Houses and three Public Hearings were held.
- 2008, 2010, 2011 and 2012 - The NC General Assembly approved an annual appropriation to the Turnpike Authority to pay debt service and other related financing expenses on revenue bonds or notes issued for the construction of the project.
- January 2012 - A Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was issued.

- October 2012 - NCTA provided an update on the Mid-Currituck Bridge Project before the Joint Legislative Transportation Oversight Committee.
- NCTA is prepared a Record of Decision (ROD) for its Preferred Alternative, which includes a Mid-Currituck Bridge. FHWA approval of the ROD is expected soon. The ROD signals the end of the environmental study process. NCTA is also negotiating the terms of a concession agreement with its private partner, the Currituck Development Group, LLC.